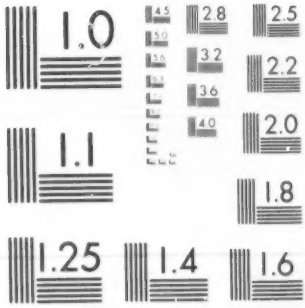

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A

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THE ACCURACY OF ADULT DISABLED READERS' PERCEPTION OF THEIR OWN READING DIFFICULTIES

Ellen M. West, Ed.D. and Diana L. Lagotic, Ph.D.
Alachua County School Board
1817 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida 32601

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Ellen M. West, Ed.D. and Diana L. Lagotic, Ph.D.
Alachua County School Board
1817 East University Avenue, Gainesville
Florida 32601

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A continuing concern of adult educators has been to determine the areas of reading difficulty experienced by adults attending high school completion programs (Fay, 1966; Otto and Ford, 1967; Bowren and Zintz, 1977). In an effort to minimize initial testing, an Adult Reading Survey (ARS) was developed to measure self-perceptions as related to reading ability. Students' self-reported comments of reading difficulties, which were noted within a clinical setting, prompted the development of the survey and provided the basis for its content.

METHOD

One hundred eighty-four adult education students, ranging in ages from fifteen to sixty-eight, were asked to respond to the ARS, which dealt with their perception of their own reading abilities. The survey, which was read with the students, consisted of nine (9) items related to specific reading and word recognition skills plus one open-ended statement for student comments. Portions of two (2) tests, the Test of Adult Basic Education, Form M (TABE) (Tiegs and Clark, 1967) and the Botel Reading Inventory (Botel, 1970) were used to confirm or negate the problem areas indicated by students on the ARS.

The reading portion of the TABE, which included measures of vocabulary and comprehension skills, was group administered. Through an item analysis these results provided a measure of five (5) specific skill areas: vocabulary, following directions, inference, main ideas and remembering facts and details. Powell's Informal Reading Inventory Scoring Criteria (Beery, Barrett, Powell, 1973) was used to delineate the problem/no problem areas as computed at the frustration levels.

The Nonsense Words list of the Botel Reading Inventory (Botel, 1970) was administered individually to evaluate each student's word attack skills. A nonsense word list was chosen in order to avoid the possibility of an adult student using acoustic matching as a means of determining an unfamiliar sight word. Although the Nonsense Word List of the Botel does not provide an evaluative criteria, a maximum of five

(5) errors in 15 was established as an indication of a problem/no problem area (McNinch and Carmichael, 1973). These results corresponded to four (4) survey items: beginning, middle, ending and vowel sounds.

RESULTS

The relationship between test results and students' self-perceptions, as related to reading abilities, was examined using the Kendall Tau-B formula in order to determine levels of accuracy. The matrices depict the relationship analized between test results and students' perceptions. (See matrices attached.) Results indicated that the highest correlations between test scores and students' perceptions were found in the following items: middle and ending sounds, inference and vocabulary. The correlations between overall perception and overall reading ability indicated that better readers had a tendency to be more accurate in their perceptions. Less able readers were not accurate in their perceptions; they were not able to identify their weak or strong abilities.

DISCUSSION

The Adult Reading Survey, which was developed to measure students' self-perceptions as related to reading ability, can be useful as a screening device with adults. The ARS can be utilized to eliminate unnecessary testing. If students perceive themselves as poor readers, testing is needed in order to determine specific weaknesses. If students perceive themselves as good readers, the

chances are that their responses on the ARS will be accurate.

One of the most positive aspects of this study dealt with the correction of students' faulty self-perceptions. In a number of instances, students' ARS responses indicated that they perceived themselves as poor readers when in reality they were found to be good readers. Through individual conferences, a comparison of ARS responses with test results allowed these faulty self-perceptions to be corrected. Self-images improved dramatically and marked differences in attitudes toward reading were noted.

DETAIL

PERCIEVED	TEST RESULTS: PROBLEM	TEST RESULTS: NO PROBLEM
NO PROBLEM	1.0	99.0
PROBLEM	20.5	79.5

N=182
r=.16

BEGINNING SOUNDS OF WORDS

	2.1	97.9
	3.8	96.2

N=149
r=.05

ENDING SOUNDS OF WORDS

	6.6	93.4
	17.8	82.2

N=149
r=.33

MAIN IDEA

	54.1	45.9
	70.1	29.9

N=182
r=.16

VOCABULARY

	12.7	87.3
	50.0	50.0

N=147
r=.40

INFERENCE

	33.6	66.4
	72.9	27.1

N=183
r=.38

MIDDLE SOUNDS OF WORDS

	9.1	90.9
	38.6	61.4

N=149
r=.33

FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

	11.8	88.2
	37.9	62.1

N=181
r=.26

VOWEL SOUNDS IN WORDS

	28.7	71.3
	38.2	61.8

N=149
r=.10

ADULT READING SURVEY YOUR NAME_____

1. I have trouble understanding and remembering what I read. TRUE FALSE

2. It is hard for me to sound-out the first letters of a word I don't know. TRUE FALSE

3. I have trouble sounding-out the middle part of a new word. TRUE FALSE

4. When I try to figure out a new word, I have trouble with the sounds that come at the end of the word. TRUE FALSE

5. The vowel sounds (a,e,i,o,u) cause trouble for me when I am trying to sound-out a word. TRUE FALSE

6. I can't seem to remember important facts or details when I read. TRUE FALSE

7. Sometimes an author doesn't tell you everything that happens in a story. Can you tell what has taken place even though it may not be written within the story? YES NO

8. Another problem that I have when I read is.....

9. I have trouble following written directions. YES NO

10. I have trouble with vocabulary - learning new words YES NO

Thanks!

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ABSTRACT

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In an effort to minimize initial testing of adult students, an Adult Reading Survey (ARS) was developed to measure self-perception as related to reading ability. Survey responses of one hundred eighty-four adult education students ranging in age from fifteen to sixty-eight were correlated to reading test results to determine levels of accuracy. Portions of two (2) tests, the Test of Adult Basic Education, Form M (1967) and the Botel Reading Inventory (1970) were used to confirm or negate the problem areas indicated by students on the ARS.

Results indicated that the highest correlations between test scores and students' perceptions were found on the following items: middle and ending sounds, inference and vocabulary.